

HHS ANNOUNCES 2003 SOLICITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTERS

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson today announced the release of a solicitation for proposals that will support state efforts to develop Aging and Disability Resource Centers.

In communities across America a broad range of programs and services are available to assist older adults and individuals with disabilities in need of long-term support services. These services are supported by numerous funding streams, are often administered by multiple agencies, and frequently have complex intake, assessment and eligibility requirements. Individuals in need of support and their family caregivers are frequently overwhelmed as they try to navigate fragmented and duplicative systems, which can lead to unnecessary institutionalization.

“Aging and Disability Resource Center Grants will offer states the opportunity to create “one stop shop” centers on long-term care. These Centers will serve as visible and trusted places where people can turn for information on the full range of long-term care options and assistance in accessing the options supported by public programs” explains HHS Secretary Thompson. “The Centers will enhance citizen choice and support informed decision-making.”

Under the Aging and Disability Resource Center grant program, up to sixteen (16) projects will be funded for up to \$800,000 over three (3) years.

The solicitation is part of the President’s Freedom Initiative, which charges HHS and other federal agencies to partner together to develop effective solutions to overcome barriers to community living for the elderly and people with disabilities. Resource Center Grants offer states a mechanism to effectively integrate their many long-term support resources for consumers into a single coordinated system. The Resource Center grants are a joint effort of the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Program builds upon previous AoA and CMS initiatives as well as efforts of states like Wisconsin, where, under Secretary Thompson, aging and disability centers were created to simplify consumer access to long-term care.

Recognizing that states have created a variety of service models to meet the unique needs of the populations they serve, the Resource Center Grant Program has been designed to allow for a great deal of flexibility. Some state systems may utilize a single agency serving as the entry point to long term support while other states will establish Resource Centers with multiple sites that are coordinated and standardized to ensure all individuals are provided with uniform access to long term support options

“As I’ve traveled across the country conducting Town Hall meetings,” reports AoA Assistant Secretary Carbonell, “one thing I’ve heard loud and clear is that families need access to reliable and accurate information about long term support services. The Resource Center grant program single entry point system will ensure that those who need these critical services will find information and access simple and readily available.”

“Resource Centers will be a tremendous help to families who are often desperate to find appropriate care for a loved one near home and on a budget,” said Tom Scully, administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. “These grants are just the beginning of what we hope will be an effective network for these families..”

All states are eligible to apply for a Resource Center grant. Applicants must have the support and active involvement of the Single State Agency on Aging and the Single State Medicaid Agency. To be considered for funding, applications must be received by the deadline of July 28, 2003.

For more information on the Aging and Disability Resource Centers Grant program, please visit the AoA web site at <http://www.aoa.gov> or the CMS web site at www.cms.hhs.gov/newfreedom/default.asp.